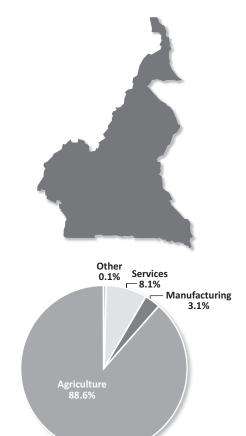
Cameroon

In 2010, the Government of Cameroon enacted Law No. 2010/12, which prohibits child pornography, and developed a strategy to implement its Trafficking in Persons Action Plan. However, the Government has not adopted comprehensive policies on the worst forms of child labor, and there are significant gaps in the enforcement of its child labor laws. This may contribute to children's continued work in the worst forms of child labor, especially in cocoa production.

Statistics on Working Children and School Attendance

Children	Age	Percent
Working	5 - 14 yrs.	36.5
Attending School	5 - 14 yrs.	80.4
Combining Work and School	10 - 14 yrs.	7.6



Prevalence and Sectoral Distribution of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Children in Cameroon are engaged in the worst forms of child labor, many of them working in agriculture in the production of goods such as cocoa. Ochildren also reportedly work to produce bananas, coffee, palm oil, rubber and tea. Many children working on farms, especially in the production of cocoa, handle pesticides and sharp tools, till soil and transport heavy loads. Reports also suggest that children raise livestock, such as cattle, risking injury and exposure to long hours and the elements.

Children, primarily girls, work as domestic servants, which may require them to work long hours and expose them to physical and sexual exploitation. Although the extent of the problem is unknown, there are reports that children work in artisanal gold mines and quarries, carrying sand and breaking stones. 1065

In the urban informal sector, children carry luggage, sell goods such as cigarettes and water and drive commercial motorcycles. They usually drive without the proper license and frequently cause accidents. Ohildren working on the streets may be exposed to many dangers, including severe weather, vehicle accidents and criminal elements. Such children are also at risk of being accused of practicing witchcraft and may be beaten, burned or killed. To a lesser degree, some displaced or street children who live in cities such as Yaoundé and Douala transport drugs and risk being recruited into gangs. Ohio

Children in Cameroon are also forced to beg. In Cameroon, especially in the northern region, it is a tradition to send boys to Koranic teachers to receive education. While some boys receive lessons, others are forced by their teachers to beg and surrender the money that they have earned. 1070

Girls are vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. One children are exploited in commercial sex tourism in coastal towns such as Kribi and may engage in the production of pornography. Hereditary servitude reportedly persists in northern regions of Cameroon.

Child trafficking is also a problem. Most trafficking occurs internally and is most prevalent in the Northwest region and may be linked to the customary practice of sending a child to a relative or friend for school. 1074 Children are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor as domestic servants and in restaurants, bars and on tea plantations. 1075 Children are also trafficked to work on cocoa farms and on the streets. 1076 Internationally, children are trafficked to Cameroon from West and Central Africa for forced labor in street vending, agriculture, fishing and spare-parts shops. Cameroon also serves as a transit country for children trafficked between Gabon and Nigeria. 1077

Laws and Regulations on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

The Labor Code sets the minimum age for work at 14, and Law No. 017 sets the minimum age for hazardous work at 18.1078 The Government does not provide protection to children working in nonindustrial undertakings, such as agriculture, domestic service and street vending, even though many children are known to work in these sectors. 1079 Children are not permitted to work underground, in restaurants, hotels, or bars or in any job that exceeds their physical capacity or is longer than 8 hours a day in the industrial sector.¹⁰⁸⁰ However, work underwater and at dangerous heights, which are activities often performed by children who fish or harvest bananas, are not deemed by law to be hazardous activities for children. 1081

Children are required to attend school until age 11. This standard makes children ages 11 to 14 particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child

MION	C138, Minimum Age	✓
	C182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	CRC	✓
	CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	No
	CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography	No
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓
	Minimum Age for Work	14
	Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	18
	Compulsory Education Age	11
	Free Public Education	Yes

labor as they are not required to be in school and are below the minimum age for work. ¹⁰⁸² Presidential Decree No. 2001/041 establishes the right to free education. However, in practice, additional school fees and the costs of books and uniforms are prohibitive for many families. ¹⁰⁸³

The Constitution and Law No. 15 prohibit slavery and servitude, and Law No. 15 provides penalties for those found to be in violation of the law. 1084 Law No. 15 also prohibits child trafficking. 1085 The Penal Code prohibits forced labor, slavery and the procurement of prostitutes or sharing the profits from another person's prostitution. 1086 During the reporting period, the Government enacted Law No. 2010/12, Related to Cyber Security and Cybercrime in Cameroon, which prohibits electronic forms of child pornography. 1087 Cameroon has not criminalized the use of children for illicit activities, which is a documented worst form of child labor in Cameroon. 1088 Military service is not compulsory, and the minimum age for voluntary recruitment is 18. Children younger than age 18 can participate in military service with parental consent. 1089

Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and **Enforcement**

The interagency Consultative Committee to Implement the ILO-IPEC West Africa Cocoa/ Commercial Agriculture Program to Combat Hazardous and Exploitative Child Labor (WACAP) project is authorized to coordinate efforts to combat child labor in Cameroon. 1090 This committee was established under a USDOLfunded project with ILO-IPEC and is composed of the Ministries of Labor and Social Insurance, Social Affairs, Justice, External Relations, Women and Family Promotion, Territorial Administration and Decentralization and Tourism, as well as the Secretariat of State of Defense, the General Delegation for National Security and the Customs Services for both seaports and airports. 1091 However, the Consultative Committee to Implement the ILO-IPEC/WACAP project has not met for several years. 1092

In 2010, the Government established an interministerial committee to coordinate government efforts to combat trafficking in persons, including training stakeholders, proposing legislation and ratifying international instruments. Chaired by the Secretary General of the Office of the Prime Minster, the committee launched its activities by approving Cameroon's strategy to implement its Trafficking in Persons Action Plan. ¹⁰⁹³ The Government has also created within the General Delegation for National Security, a "vice squad," which is a police division established to coordinate efforts to combat sex trafficking. ¹⁰⁹⁴

The Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance leads efforts to enforce child labor laws. ¹⁰⁹⁵ Its 58 labor inspectors check registered businesses only, whereas child labor is more common in unregistered enterprises, including agriculture. Enforcement efforts may therefore leave children unprotected. ¹⁰⁹⁶ Other agencies also play a role in child labor law enforcement, as well as in criminal law enforcement. The National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms is charged with

investigating human rights abuses, and the Minors Brigade is responsible for investigating the use of children in hazardous work and trafficking. The vice squad also investigates the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, while the police, *gendarmes* (a military body charged with police duties among civilian populations) and border officials help combat the worst forms of child labor nationwide. Reportedly, the above agencies routinely lack transportation and fuel to conduct investigations. 1099

In Cameroon, complaints about hazardous child labor may be initiated by the victim or officials from the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance and may be reported to a local ministry representative or law enforcement officer. Once a complaint is filed, an investigation is conducted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance. Minor offenses are settled at the ministerial level, and serious offenses are handled by the prosecutor's office. 1100

The Government of Cameroon does not generally offer training directly to officials responsible for enforcing child labor laws. However, during the reporting period, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms and national and international NGOs provided specialized training on how to identify trafficking victims to some of its law enforcement officers and magistrates. 1101

According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance, during the reporting period, complaints were received of child labor violations, and inspections were conducted in sectors where children work. However, the Government was not able to provide the precise number of complaints or investigations nor was it able to confirm whether penalties for violations, such as fines, were collected. ¹¹⁰² In the Northwest, Center, and Southwest regions, 21 trafficking investigations were conducted, 172 children were removed from trafficking situations, and three traffickers were charged and placed in pretrial detention. ¹¹⁰³

Government Policies on the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In 2010, the Government of Cameroon launched its strategy to implement its Trafficking in Persons Action Plan and seek removal from USDOS's Trafficking in Persons Tier 2 Watch List. 1104 This plan outlines efforts to prosecute and convict trafficking offenders, educate law enforcement personnel and social workers on the laws against child trafficking, develop and enact legislation prohibiting the trafficking of adults, train enforcement personnel to use the human trafficking database and investigate reports of hereditary servant abuse. 1105 The Government's 2011 budget includes \$40,000 for the Prime Minister's Office to implement this strategy. However, it does not address all relevant worst forms of child labor or include a concrete timeline. 1106 The Government has drafted a National Plan of Action to Combat Child Labor and Trafficking in Children. However, the Government has yet to ratify or officially approve this plan. 1107

The Government has included child labor concerns in relevant development agendas and key social policy documents, including the recently adopted National Policy Framework Document for the Full Development of the Young Child (2009), which charts needed action in health, education and protection covering 10 programs. 1108 Cameroon also included child labor concerns in its PRSP, although this policy does not have budgets or detailed action plans related to the worst forms of child labor. 1109 The Government continued to appoint Child Parliamentarians to provide recommendations on issues related to children, including child labor. 1110 The question of whether these policies have an impact on child labor does not appear to have been addressed.

During the reporting period, Cameroon also took steps to combat the use of child soldiers by signing the N'Djamena Declaration. This declaration notes the intent to eliminate the practice of child soldiers, provide services to victims, prosecute

recruiters and establish national and cross-border monitoring mechanisms.¹¹¹¹

Social Programs to Eliminate or Prevent the Worst Forms of Child Labor

In 2010, the Government continued to support efforts to eliminate the use of child labor on cocoa farms by participating in the 5-year Phase II Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), funded by USAID, the World Cocoa Foundation and the international cocoa industry. STCP is a publicprivate partnership that promotes sustainable tree crop systems, including coffee, cocoa and cashews and contains a component to prevent and eliminate the worst forms of child labor on farms.1112 The Government also concluded a regional ILO-IPEC project to eliminate exploitative child labor in the cocoa sector and participated in a regional project to develop a National Action Plan on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, which was funded by the Government of Italy for \$1 million from January 2008 to June 2011.1113

Cameroon continued to implement its 2008-2012 cooperative agreement to protect and provide services to child trafficking victims.¹¹¹⁴ The Government also participated in the USDOSfunded anti-trafficking in children program in the Northwest, Center, and Southwest regions, which provided rehabilitation support to trafficking victims and training to 90 law enforcement officers, judges, social workers, shelter staff and community leaders. 1115 The Committee for Justice and Peace of the Episcopal Conference also provided anti-trafficking training to law enforcement officers and magistrates. 1116 In February 2011, the Government, in partnership with UNICEF, launched an awareness-raising campaign on the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. As part of this effort, the Government distributed pamphlets and posters with anti-trafficking messages in schools.1117

During the reporting period, the Government continued its ongoing program to provide

shelter and educational and reintegration services to children living and working on the streets in Maroua, Douala and Yaoundé. The Government also participated in a 4-year, USDOL-funded, \$3.7 million global project to collect data on child labor. 1119

Despite the initiatives described here, Cameroon's social programs do not address all sectors where children work and are limited in the northern regions, which have the highest child labor participation rates.¹¹²⁰

Based on the reporting above, the following actions would advance the reduction of the worst forms of child labor in Cameroon:

IN THE AREA OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

- Provide legal protection to children working in nonindustrial undertakings.
- Prohibit dangerous activities such as work underwater and at dangerous heights and enact legislation to prohibit the use, procuring or offering of children for illicit activities.
- Raise the age for compulsory education to 14, the established minimum age for work.
- Implement Presidential Decree No. 2001/041, which establishes free education.

IN THE AREA OF COORDINATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

- Ensure the Consultative Committee to Implement the ILO-IPEC/WACAP project and General Delegation of National Security meet regularly.
- Increase the number of labor inspectors to ensure the inspection of unregistered enterprises and allocate more resources to the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance.
- Gather and make publicly available information about child labor investigations and enforcement.

IN THE AREA OF POLICIES:

- Adopt a policy that addresses all relevant worst forms of child labor, including agriculture, domestic service and mining.
- Formally adopt and implement the National Plan of Action to Combat Child Labor and Trafficking in Children.
- Assess the impact that existing policies may have on addressing child labor, including the National Policy Framework Document for the Full Development of the Young Child and the PRSP.
- Include a concrete timeline in the strategy to implement the Trafficking in Persons Action Plan and to seek removal from the Trafficking in Persons Tier 2 Watch List.

IN THE AREA OF PROGRAMS:

 Develop social protection programs that assist children working in the worst forms of child labor in sectors such as agriculture and domestic service and expand existing programs to the northern region.

1060 Data provided in the chart at the beginning of this country report are based on UCW analysis of ILO SIMPOC, UNICEF MICS, and World Bank surveys, Child Economic Activity, School Attendance, and Combined Working and Studying Rates, 2001-2011. Data on working children and school attendance are from 2007. Data on children combining working and schooling are from 2001. Reliable data on the worst forms of child labor are especially difficult to collect given the often hidden or illegal nature of the worst forms. As a result, statistics and information on children's work in general are reported in this section, which may or may not include the worst forms of child labor. For more information on sources used, the definition of working children, and other indicators used in this report, please see the "Children's Work and Education Statistics: Sources and Definitions" section of this report. See also International Labour Organization, Rooting out child labour from cocoa farms- Paper No. 3: Sharing experiences, Geneva, 2007, 20; available from http://www.ilo.org/ ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=6444. See also Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, Travail des enfants dans les plantations ouest-africaines de cacao, Paris, February 15, 2009, 18, 22; available from http://www.oecd. org/dataoecd/32/15/42358247.pdf. See also Government of Cameroon, Etude sur le travail des enfants au Cameroun, Institut National de la Statistique, 2007, 2-3.

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